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Essentials of an Acceptable School of Cytotechnology.

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Prepared by the Council on Education of the American Medical Association in cooperation with the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, the "essentials" are organized within the areas of administration, faculty and personnel, organization, prerequisites for admission, curriculum, ethics, student health, and procedure for admission to the list of approved schools. The program director should be a pathologist and the faculty should include at least one registered cytotechnologist. Enrollment should be at least two students per class but should not exceed two students to one member of the teaching staff. The school should be associated with a clinical facility which can furnish adequate experience for students. Prequisites include two years of college with a minimum of 12 semester hours of science. The cytotechnology curriculum should be at least 1 year in length and should include historical background of cytology, application of cytology in clinical medicine, and use and limitations of cytology in screening and diagnosis of malignant and benign diseases. (JK)

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Essentials of an Acceptable School of Cytotechnology

December 1, 1967

Prepared by the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association with the cooperation of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, and presented to the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association for approval.

Two organizations are primarily concerned with the training of cytotechnologists: the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association, and the American Society of Clinical Pathologists through its Committee on Cytotechnology and Board of Schools of Medical Technology. The Board of Schools is primarily concerned with the evaluation and survey of schools of cytotechnology, acting in an advisory capacity to the Council. It also assists the Council in the maintenance of high standards of education and in the development of new schools of cytotechnology. The Board of Registry of Medical Technologists investigates and certifies the competency of the cytotechnologists who are graduates of approved schools.

The cooperating groups have established the following standards for this type of training for the information of schools, physicians, hospitals, prospective students, and others, and for the protection of the public.

Cytotechnologists are being trained in these schools to work under the direction of qualified physicians and not as independent practitioners.

I. ADMINISTRATION

1. Acceptable schools for training in exfoliative cytology may be conducted by approved medical schools, hospitals, or other acceptable laboratories suitably organized in accordance with present educational standards.

2. All training of cytotechnologists shall be under competent medical supervision.

3. The resources for continued operation of a school should be insured through regular budgets, gifts, or endowments, but not entirely through students' fees. Such a training school for exfoliative cytology should not be operated for profit, and students should not be exploited for service. Schools should adhere to proper and suitable ethical and educational standards recognized by the Board of Schools of Medical Technology, the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, and the American Medical Association.

II. FACULTY AND PERSONNEL

4. The director must be a pathologist certified by the American Board of Pathology or be eligible for certification by this Board and recognized as having special interest and competence in cytology with special training and experience in exfoliative cytology. The director should be actively engaged in cytology. The director, or an associate with equivalent acceptable qualifications, shall be in attendance for sufficient period throughout the training course to take an active part in and properly supervise the laboratory work and teaching.

5. The teaching staff should include qualified instructors adequate for both group and individual instruction. It should include at least one instructor, in addition to the director, who is a registered cytotechnologist or eligible for registration, and who is actively engaged in cytology.

6. Enrollment in a school should not exceed 2 students to each member of the teaching staff.

7. A minimum of 2 students is recommended for enrollment in each class.

III. ORGANIZATION

8. Adequate space, light, and modern equipment should be provided within the department for the teaching of cytotechnology. A library containing texts and up-to-date reference material pertaining to cytology and cytotechnology should be maintained, or be readily accessible to the institution.

9. Approved schools for training in exfoliative cytology should be associated with an acceptable institution which:

a. Maintains a current cytology test volume of at least 5,000 specimens per year to furnish adequate material for

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training and test screening experience for students. The distribution of specimen material should preferably include an adequate quantity of at least 3 of the following: female genital tract, respiratory system, gastrointestinal system, and effusions. The availability of supplementary and essential teaching material for adequate cytology study sets may be considered in lieu of the specified diagnostic service volume for the diversification of type and source of cytologic material. The quality of the material available for teaching is more important than the actual volume.

b. Maintains an adequate system of filing, recording, and indexing of results in the associated laboratory for proper cytologic correlation and evaluation. There should be close liaison with clinical services or physicians supplying cytologic material.

IV. PREREQUISITES FOR ADMISSION

10. The applicant must complete 2 years (60 semester hours, or 90 quarter hours) of work in an accredited college or university before being accepted by an approved school of cytotechnology. This preparatory work must include a minimum of 12 semester hours or 18 quarter hours of science. It is preferable that all 12 semester hours of science be in the biological sciences (which may include courses in general biology, bacteriology, parasitology, physiology, anatomy, histology, embryology, and zoology). However, 8 semester hours (12 quarter hours) of biology and 4 semester hours (6 quarter hours) of another science is acceptable.

The following are eligible for admission irrespective of the science credits possessed:

a. The holder of a registered medical technologist certificate (ASCP).

b. The holder of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.

V. CURRICULUM

11. Length of course:

Training shall be for a minimum of one year (12 months). However, at the discretion of the school director, the second half of the year (6 months) may be taken in a laboratory selected by the director of the approved school. Only laboratories having adequate clinical material and at least one ASCP registered cytotechnologist may be selected for the last 6 months of training.

12. A detailed curriculum should be provided, a copy of which is to be submitted with the application for approval. The curriculum should include the historical background of cytology, the application of cytology in clinical medicine, the use and limitations of cytology in screening and diagnosis of both malignant and benign diseases. Lectures and demonstrations in anatomy, histology, embryology, cytochemistry, cytophysiology, endocrine alterations or abnormalities, and inflammatory diseases should be presented. The preparation of materials for examination, record keeping, indexing, and methods of correlating cytology with the pathological diagnoses should be taught.

13. Regular textbook assignments, lectures, and demonstrations should be planned. Assigned time for practice in the screening of specimens should be part of the planned curriculum and testing procedure. A complete record of practical and written examinations should be maintained and continually evaluated. Although emphasis should rightfully be placed on cytology of the female genital tract, instruction in the cytology of the gastrointestinal tract, urinary tract, body cavities, lung, and other organs should be given appropriate attention.

VI. ETHICS

14. Excessive student fees and commercial advertising should be considered unethical. Schools conducted primarily for the purpose of substituting students for paid technologists will not be considered for approval.

VII. HEALTH

15. Applicants for admission to an approved school shall be required to submit evidence of good health and successful vaccinations, and a report of a medical examination should be a part of the student's records. This examination shall include a roentgen examination of the chest. Provisions should be made for medical care and reasonable hospitalization.

VIII. ADMISSION TO THE APPROVED LIST

16. Application for approval of a school for the training of cytotechnologists should be made to the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610. Forms will be supplied for this purpose on request and should be completed by the director of the school requesting this approval. Inquiries regarding the registration of qualified cytotechnologists should be addressed to the Board of Registry of Medical Technologists, Post Office Box 44, Muncie, Indiana.

17. Approval may be withdrawn whenever in the opinion of the Council a school does not maintain an educational program at least in accordance with the above minimum standards. Whenever a training program has not been in operation for a period of 2 consecutive years, approval may also be withdrawn.

18. Approved schools should notify the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association whenever a change occurs in the directorship of a school.